

Firefighters and SAFER grants included in the act will help ensure that our first responders get the critically needed personnel, equipment, protective gear, emergency vehicles, training, and upgraded facilities they need to protect the public and the emergency personnel from fire and related hazards.

Every day our Nation's firefighters risk their lives to keep our communities safe. From 30,000 fire departments in the United States, a firefighter responds to a fire every 20 seconds. Philadelphia is home to one of the oldest fire companies in the country, dating back to 1736. The Philadelphia Fire Department is one of the busiest emergency management systems in the country, handling 260,000 responses in 2006.

Throughout my time in office, I have fought to ensure that our firefighters receive the respect and resources they so keenly require. I am proud to support the reauthorization of these grants and to support our firefighters in the efforts to support our communities and families.

BLUE RIBBON BLUNDER

(Mr. COBLE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, it's not uncommon for Presidents' administrations to commit blunders, but of the several blunders that have been forthcoming from this administration, the one that stands out most prominently is the decision to authorize prosecution of the 9/11 terrorists in New York City.

This decision, Mr. Speaker, violates reason and common sense. The costs will be overwhelming, the risk not insignificant, and the defendants will enthusiastically embrace the circus atmosphere to espouse their radical views. I hope it is not too late to rescind this flawed decision and conduct the prosecutions before military tribunals.

Of the several blunders committed, this one must be awarded the ultimate blue ribbon. Mr. Speaker, let's hope it's not too late to rescind it and move forward.

ILLEGAL SUBSIDIES FOR AIRBUS

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, today in the days of 10 percent unemployment, it is particularly important to be fair to the American worker. And right now, there is a gross inequity to the American worker pending in the contract to acquire a new aerial fuel tanker by the U.S. Air Force.

Right now, we know that one of the bidders, the Airbus company, has received grossly unfair multibillion dollar subsidies from the European Union

countries. It is absolutely necessary for the United States Air Force to factor into this bid the illegal subsidies that Airbus consortium has received.

It is inconceivable that one agency of the U.S. Government has found illegal subsidies by this bidder, and another agency may award a bid without taking into consideration the illegal subsidies found by the WTO.

We are calling for the Air Force and the President to factor in these illegal subsidies so the American worker gets fairness. And that is what we deserve.

THE DRUG CARTEL ARMY

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, The Washington Times recently reported that Mexico's two most deadly drug cartels have more than 100,000 foot soldiers in their criminal cartel armies. That massive firepower does battle with each other and battle with our Border Patrol and our border sheriffs. They fight for control over the drug and human smuggling routes into America.

The killing is rampant in Mexico, with over 7,000 murders this year. Law and order are absent in parts of that nation.

The two biggest and most violent criminal cartels control territory along the border at Laredo, Texas. Now, they are considering combining their criminal enterprises. These two groups, the Zetas and the Federation, if they unite, their 100,000-man army will be almost as big as the entire Mexican Army.

The threat keeps building at our southern border. Mexico is our border neighbor, and we had better be as concerned about the stability of that government and the security of our mutual border as we are about the stability and the borders of Iraq and Afghanistan.

And that's just the way it is.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT WITH SENIORS

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, it's time to set the record straight. Too many people are trying to scare our senior citizens with misinformation.

The truth is that the Affordable Health Care for America Act will strengthen Medicare for seniors and extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by 5 years. Without reform, the Medicare Trust Fund will be exhausted within the decade. What will happen to our seniors then? It is for our seniors that we must enact health care reform now.

Our health care reform plan will eliminate copayments for preventative health services in Medicare. It will close the prescription drug doughnut

hole and make lifesaving medications affordable for our seniors. And it will make Medicare more efficient and affordable for all seniors.

We owe our seniors the truth. That's why I'm proud to support health care reform that improves Medicare for seniors and health care for all in our country.

ILLEGAL SUBSIDIES IN THE TANKER COMPETITION

(Ms. JENKINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, in September, the World Trade Organization confirmed that the European Union doled out billions in illegal subsidies to prop up the development of large aircraft. Those subsidies forced companies here in the United States to close their doors and sent Kansans to the unemployment lines.

Rather than continuing to ignore the WTO ruling, it's time for the Department of Defense to do the right thing, to take into consideration the WTO ruling as they finalize the tanker competition. At a time when the American people are struggling, this decision has the potential to create jobs and help our Nation's economy. The Department of Defense must base its decision on a fair and level playing field.

I am proud to stand with a bipartisan, bicameral group fighting for American workers and fighting for the American tanker.

I urge all of my colleagues to join us in this fight.

LEGAL AID FOR VETERANS

(Mr. KLEIN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County for launching a new innovative Armed Services Advocacy Project. This new service will provide civil legal assistance to Armed Forces members who have served in Iraq or Afghanistan and their families. With over 1,200 veterans of these ongoing conflicts residing in our community, the need for these services is tremendous.

The legal services provided by Legal Aid will be free of charge to Active Duty servicemembers, veterans and their families, and will cover a range of issues, most importantly, helping to improve access to veterans benefits.

I believe that every person who puts on the uniform of this country must have access to the full range of benefits they have earned. And this new Legal Aid project brings us one step closer to meeting this commitment in south Florida.

I would like to thank Robert Bertisch, Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County, and Elaine Martens of the Armed